

BROTHERHOODS WIN EIGHT-HOUR FIGHT— ROADS YIELD—AGREEMENT SIGNED

New York, March 19. — The railroads have met the fullest demands of the Adamson 8-hour law and thereby definitely averted the threatened nation-wide strike, with the country on the verge of its most serious crisis.

Patriotism, swayed to its height by the sinking of three American vessels, brought from the railway managers' committee early today the announcement that they would accept the brotherhood chiefs' demands, rather than give the impression at home or abroad that the efficient operation of the country's railways will be hampered or impaired in the face of its latest peril.

The railroads surrendered completely, leaving their end of the adjustment entirely in the hands of President Wilson's mediation board. A joint committee is to thrash out the minute details.

The following statement was issued by the mediators at 6 a. m.:

"We desire to express our appreciation of the large and patriotic action of the railway managers' committee, which has put beyond peradventure the possibility of a nation-wide railroad strike.

"The railroads have met the full demands of the Adamson 8-hour law. This concession was secured as the combination of two days and nights of negotiations.

"Our first efforts were to secure a postponement of the strike which was fixed for Saturday night. This was secured by presenting to the railway managers a memorandum agreement drafted by the brotherhoods, which with some particularity expressed the provision of the Adamson law.

"We asked the railways to agree that if the Adamson law was held to be constitutional that this construction and application would be given to it. The railways agreed to this at

a joint session between the brotherhood chiefs and the managers.

"And with much difficulty the chiefs stayed the strike, an act that was vital to the success of our efforts and further mediation.

"We next sought some adjustment that would be effective should the law be held to be unconstitutional. In this regard many propositions were made to both sides, but none was acceptable until the railroads expressed their willingness to place the whole matter in the hands of this committee.

"This action proceeded, as the letter from the railway managers states, from a desire to demonstrate to the country that the railroads would not allow their own conception of railroad policy to stand in the way of the fullest use of the roads at a time of severe national strain.

"The committee considered the matter and decided that in view of the action of congress in passing the Adamson law and the necessity for immediate action that it was best to adopt at once the memorandum agreement of the previous day as applicable under all conditions.

"Thus the provision of the 8-hour law, by agreement between the roads and the men, became the basis of the settlement, and whether the supreme court holds for the validity of the law or against it there will be no strike."

The railway managers' agreement with the brotherhoods today to put into operation the eight-hour day on a ten-hour basis, with pro rata pay for overtime, means approximately \$1,000,000 a week added to the pay rolls of the railroads. Thirteen million dollars extra back pay, dating from Jan. 1, when the Adamson law was to have become effective, will be distributed among the 400,000 trainmen.

The federal mediation board will